

Message Text

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51

ACTION EB-11

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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7570

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

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AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

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UNCLAS BEIRUT 4910

DEPT PASS COMMERCE FOR R. COHEN: KUWAIT POUCH DOHA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ETRN, UAE

SUBJECT: CIVAIR - GULF AIR REEQUIPMENT

REF: BEIRUT A-48 OF MARCH 13, 1974; BEIRUT 2587

SUMMARY: INDUSTRY AND PRESS REPORTS, BEIRUT, POINT TO GULF AIR ACCELERATION FLEET REEQUIPMENT PLANNING WITH INDICATIONS AIRLINE WILL ORDER SEVERAL WIDEBODIED AIRCRAFT THIS YEAR FOR DELIVERY 1976. 1980 FLEET REQUIREMENT POINTS TO THREE WIDEBODIED AIRCRAFT VALUED AT \$90 MILLION AND FIVE BOEING ADVANCED 727-200'S VALUED AT \$50 MILLION. FINANCING FOR NEW FLEET APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN OFFERED BY RULER OF QATAR, SHEIKH KHALIFA BEN HAMAD EL THANI.
END SUMMARY

1. AS REPORTED REFTEL AND REFAIR, GULF AIR GENERAL MANAGER BODGER AND BOARD MEMBER GAYED HAVE INDICATED
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GULF AIR PROGRAMING FOR RETIREMENT OF VC-10'S, FOR

REPLACEMENT BY WIDEBODIED AIRCRAFT, AS EARLY AS 1977. HOWEVER, NEWS ITEM PUBLISHED BEIRUT DAILY STAR APRIL 25 INDICATES AIRLINE/NOW ACCELERATING WIDEBODIED PLANNING, WITH STATEMENT GULF AIR BOARD OF DIRECTORS HAS DECIDED ORDER LONG-RANGE WIDEBODIED AIRCRAFT THIS YEAR FOR IN-SERVICE DATE 1976. ACCORDING NEWS REPORT, THIS DECISION REACHED BOARD MEETING BAHRAIN APRIL 17.

2. REPORT FURTHER INDICATES PROPOSAL PUT FORTH BY SAMI GAYED (PRESIDENT OF QATAR CIVIL AVIATION COUNCIL AND QATARI REPRESENTATIVE GULF AIR BOARD OF DIRECTORS), IN ACCORDANCE WITH INSTRUCTIONS OF SHEIKH KHALIFA BEN HAMAD EL THANI, RULER OF QATAR. ITEM INDICATES PRESENT GULF AIR FLEET OF THREE VC10'S AND THREE BAC 111-400'S WOULD BE REPLACED BY WIDEBODIED JETS (TWO TO THREE) TO COVER INTERNATIONAL ROUTES AND BY SMALLER MODERN JETS TO COVER GULF AREA. BY MODERN JETS WE ASSUME THIS REFERS TO REPLACEMENT OF GULF AIR'S THREE BAC 111-400'S BY NEW TWINJETS IN CATEGORY OF MCDONNELL DOUGLAS DC-9-50 OR BOEING 737-200 OR MORE PROBABLY, TRIJETS IN CATEGORY OF BOEING 727-200.

3. WIDEBODIED JETS FOR GULF AIR'S INTERNATIONAL ROUTES WOULD BE EITHER L-1011-100/200 TRISTAR, MCDONNELL DOUGLAS DC10-20/40, OR BOEING 747SP, WITH CRITICAL SECTOR REQUIREMENT MUSCAT-LONDON (3,700 STATUTE MILES) WITH FULL LOAD PASSENGERS AND BAGGAGE.

4. FUAD BARDAWIL, DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT CONSULTANT FOR MIDDLE EAST, SUBSTANTIATES BEIRUT NEWS STORY ON BASIS MEETING LAST WEEK BAHRAIN WITH GULF AIR GENERAL MANAGER BODGER AND GULF AIR BORAD MEMBER YSSEF SHERAWI AND IN RECENT MEETING BEIRUT WITH GULF AIR BOARD MEMBER SAMI GAYED. LOCKHEED-CALIFORNIA'S ROGER TODD AND DOUGLAS AIRCRAFT COMPANY'S GEORGE POHLE EACH PLANNING SALES VISIT GULF AIR NEXT WEEK.

5. LOCKHEED MIDEAST'S (LOCKHEED AIRCRAFT CORPORATION'S MARKETING ENTIRY, BEIRUT) PRESIDENT CONLEY INDICATES TO RCAA THAT RULER OF QATAR HAS OFFERED TO FINANCE GULF AIR'S NEW FLEET WHICH APPEARS TO BE INITIALLY TWO WIDE-UNCLASSIFIED

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BODIED AIRCRAFT VALUED AT \$60 MILLION AND THREE BOEING ADVANCED 727-200 TRIJETS VALUED AT \$30 MILLION, BUILDING TO A 1980 FLEET OF THREE WIDEBODIED AIRCRAFT AND FIVE ADVANCED 727-200'S. INFORMATION THIS PARA BASED ON CONLEY'S CONVERSATIONS WITH GULF AIR DIRECTOR SAMI GAYED LAST WEEK, WHO STOPPED OVER BEIRUT ENROUTE MONTREAL. GODLEY

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